

diameter? This is a point which it would be both important and interesting to have confirmed by more detailed and special observation.

Lycosa ingens must indeed have great power; it is the largest known spider of the *Tarantula* group; an adult female in my own collection (from Porto Santo) measures $1\frac{2}{3}$ inch in length, exclusive of the legs and palpi; the male, however, is much smaller. If Mr. Pollock's example was an adult female, the length of its body and that of the body of the lizard (exclusive of the tail) would be about equal, so that the easy and speedy demolition of the lizard need not excite surprise.

Another observation of Mr. Pollock, and one upon which he grounds a strong and (if sound) an interesting generalization, is that each of the three islands of Madeira, Porto Santo, and Deserta Grande has its "own peculiar large *Lycosa*, no two being alike; and (Mr. Pollock continues) it is a very remarkable fact that these *Lycosæ* vary in size inversely with the magnitude of the island in which they are found,—Madeira, the largest island, having the smallest *Lycosa*, and Deserta Grande, the smallest island, having by far the largest spider." It would be important to know what were the range and extent of the observations upon which this is stated; the already published facts respecting the localities frequented by *Lycosa ingens* are certainly at variance with it. Mr. Blackwall states (Ann. Nat. Hist., Sept. 1867) that he had received both sexes of this species *from all three of those islands*; the same author (Ann. Nat. Hist. ser. 2, xx. p. 284) also states that he had received another almost equally large species, *Lycosa tarantuloides maderiana* (Walck.), from Porto Santo; and I have in my collection examples of this same species from that island. It would therefore surprise me very much to find that any careful and at all extended search should confirm Mr. Pollock's conclusion that these three islands, so apparently derived from a common origin and so near to each other, should be yet so capricious in respect of the distribution of their *Lycosæ*.

Bloxworth, November 16, 1872.

LXVI.—*Notice of a large Siluroid from the Upper Amazons.*
By Dr. ALBERT GÜNTHER.

THE Trustees of the British Museum have recently purchased a very large specimen of a Siluroid from the river Huallaga, Upper Amazons; it had been captured by B. La Mert, Esq., who adopted the best method of preparing such large specimens, by having it carefully skinned, the fins and head remaining intact and attached to the skin, and then packing it in spirits

of wine, which had to be changed twice, in a cask of suitable size. The specimen arrived in very good condition, and is now stuffed and mounted.

It belongs to a species apparently allied to *Platystoma truncatum*, but differing in the width of the bands of teeth in the upper jaw and palate; moreover it has the barbels much shorter than any of the other known species. I propose to name it

Platystoma gigas.

D. 1/6. A. 11. The upper jaw projects conspicuously beyond the lower. The length of the head is contained thrice and two thirds in the total length (without caudal). Head covered with skin; maxillary barbels much shorter than the head, mandibular barbels still shorter. The intermaxillary band of teeth is rather broader than the vomerine portion of the band on the palate, which has a crescentic form; the intermaxillary and palatine bands are separated from each other by a very narrow interspace. The dorsal fin commences midway between the end of the snout and the origin of the adipose fin, and its first ray is rather feeble; the length of the adipose fin equals that of the anal. Caudal deeply forked. Colour of a uniform greyish brown, darker above than below.

	ft. in.	
Total length	6	6
Length of head	1	6
„ snout (from the eye)	0	8
Distance between the eyes	0	5½

LXVII.—*Description of some new Species of Birds in the National Collection.* By R. BOWDLER SHARPE, F.L.S., F.Z.S., &c., Senior Assistant, Zoological Department, British Museum.

Family **Paridæ**.

Subfamily *SITTINÆ*.

Sitta tephronota, n. sp.

S. similis S. Neumayeri, sed rostro longiore, coloribus conspicue pallidioribus, et linea nigra per oculum ducta usque ad interscapulium extensa distinguenda.

The large Nuthatch from Central Asia appears to me to be worthy of specific separation from the typical *S. Neumayeri* of Europe (*S. syriaca*, Ehr.). In the 'Birds of Europe,' Mr. Dresser and myself examined a bird from Kokand, which differed extraordinarily in size from the typical Grecian and